/1 cont'd/

101 175 were suppressed, the fort of Lo-an was subsequently built. Miao troops of Kwangsi were then sent there as a garrison. They were called yao-kung-shou /"shooters of poison arrows"/. After the military camp fell into disuse, their descendants scattered into the mountains [211 278] and valleys, but they still bore the name of Miao. Even up to the present, they are still skillful in using poison arrows. The styles of their clothes, shoes, and queues are similar to that of ordinary people [291 348] /i.e. the Chinese/. The dress of their women, however, are like that of the Li. All of them are able to climb trees like monkeys. They are not subject to taxes or levies of service. They never till the land in the plains but clear in the mountains to make plots where [521] they plant mountain rice. (The Li people also do this.) They move once a year. When the land in the mountains recovers from depletion, they move back again. The bodies of their dead are usually burned [524] or are simply hung on treetops to decompose through exposure. They are experts in making poison arrows. Whatever they shoot dies without shedding a drop of blood. /2/ They also practice sorcery and are [754] able to control human beings and animals by means of amulets. Hence they are greatly feared and respected by both the civilized and uncivilized Li tribes."

In other localities many different names were used such as Lang-mu /"wolf eyes"/, Ta-shou /"attackers"/, and Lang-t'u ping /"soldiers from the land of wolves"/, etc. These probably also indicated the Miao. Wang Tso in his book, P'ing Li Chi /Record of the Suppression of the Li Uprisings/ said:

"...on that day the troops under his command were dispersed to advance to capture a road. He believed that the northern entrance of the head fortress in Hai-t'ien and Hsin-ch'ang was the central stronghold of the bandits. The central army was commanded by Ts'an-chiang* Ma Ch'eng, who ordered 10,000 Han-ta troops and

[104]

*/Former title of a lieutenant colonel.--Ed./

Lang-t'u ping of Liang Kuang /i.e., Kwangtung and Kwangsi/ to attack the central stronghold." (See Vol. 9, "I-wen" /Literary Section/

/23 cont'd/

133 become especially skilled in hunting. At the same time, the
221 mountain slopes are very well suited to animal husbandry. Owing to the lack of streams, however, fishing is rather negligible. In general, agriculture—tilling the mountain slopes—remains the
[224] chief aspect of their economic life. Hunting is also very important and, to a lesser extent, animal husbandry, while fishing is of no importance. Their economic life is thus entirely conditioned by geographic factors. We shall discuss this in the following sections.

2. Agriculture

241 There are two different methods of agriculture adopted by the Miao, cultivating level fields and planting the mountain slopes. As we have mentioned before, there is a good deal of mountainous land and few level fields. Therefore, the planting of mountain slopes is the chief /24/ form of agriculture while the cultivation of level rice fields is only secondary.

The work of planting the mountain slopes usually begins in the second month of the lunar year. First, they cut down the trees; then they cease working for a short period to allow the branches to be dried by the sun, after which they burn them; the ashes remaining are a natural fertilizer. Subsequently, they sow the seed in holes dug by spades and hoes. The main crop they cultivate is rice grown on dry land. Corn and beans are also raised on a large scale.
[242] After the seeds are sown, they neither fertilize nor irrigate, and only after the crops are grown is any weeding done. The eighth or ninth month of the same year is usually the time of harvest.

243 Their method of cultivating their level rice fields is almost the
[171] same as that of the Chinese. Cultivation usually begins in early spring. Their tools consist of ploughs and harrows which are drawn
[231] by oxen. Their method of sowing and transplanting the rice sprouts is also the same as the Chinese. However, they pay little attention to fertilizing, irrigation, and weeding. The wet rice fields can be cultivated and harvested twice a year. The first period is from the first month to the fifth month of the lunar year; the second period from the sixth to the ninth month. With dry fields there is

/25 cont'd/

3. Hunting

224 411 Living deep in the mountains, the Miao people are the companions of birds and animals. In their leisure time, therefore, the men usually go out hunting. The principal weapon is the musket and gunpowder, which are imported by Chinese merchants. The gun is of the same type used by the Chinese. Only the leather [414 5 281] powder bag is made by themselves. The bow used by the Miao people is also an efficient weapon for hunting. It is made of wood, and the string is made of hemp. Iron arrowheads are used for hunting large animals, bamboo ones for birds. It is said that they have [278] a virulent poison which is made of a mixture of leaves of certain plants, gall of poisonous snakes, and other such things. Any beast shot by these poisoned arrows will die immediately without shedding a drop of blood. The poisoned arrows are always firmly sealed in tubes which are not opened until just before use. If they are exposed to the air for a longer period, the poison would be dissipated by exposure and the arrows cannot kill the animals. There are also 278 752 certain drugs to be used as antidotes to the poison. /26/ If a man is shot by mistake, he can be cured by taking a drug which is said to be made from wine dregs. After being buried in the ground for a few years, the moisture in the dregs is completely evaporated, and it becomes a hard lump. If a victim of a poisoned arrow swallows a piece of this, the poison is immediately neutralized.

224 171 In the Miao mountains, one may encounter the Miao in small groups of three to five with guns or bows in hand looking for birds and animals. They are all good shots who hardly miss. This skill can never be matched by the Li people.

4. Animal Husbandry

231 As far as the geographic environment is concerned, the Miao area is very suitable for animal husbandry. But in fact herding is not very popular among the Miao. We can hardly find a family among the Miao which owns a herd of several tens or perhaps several hundreds of mountain cattle, as is the case among the Li.

3: Moninger I-5 (no date) 1921 AE5 Miao AE5

in hollowed-out tree trunks lined with leaves of the wild banana. Every man has his hunting knife, carried in a wicker pouch at his back. The chopping knives for clearing the forest are heavier. Every family seems to have at least one gun, a clumsy, heavy, old-fashioned type, used in hunting. The pig trough is a hollow log, the family wash-basin a cross section of a big tree rudely scooped and hollowed out. The rice mortars too are cross sections of trees, and the mallets are wooden, not even stone-tipped, in most cases. The ever-present bamboo and rattan make the rice sieves, the woven baskets used as chicken coops, the beds, and the little baskets swung from the roof beam, in which the baby is put when it is not on its mother's back or in a hammock-like piece of cloth. The fishnets are woven of the native hemp, as are the bags which the women swing across their backs and use to carry corn, sweet potatoes, other tubers, or anything they happen to wish to move. Water is carried in rude wooden buckets, possibly in kerosene tins, if a family has somehow come into possession of such articles, in small earthenware jars, or in three foot length sections of large bamboo. These latter are used if the water must be gotten from a very shallow stream, as three or four of them lashed together hold almost as much as a bucket and can be laid down flat in the stream. Clothes are washed at the river side, on flat stones.

The people make their living by farming, depending on hunting and fishing to supplement their food supply. Different from the Chinese, they know nothing of fertilizing their fields except by the use of wood ashes. Neither do they know how to raise rice in paddy fields, but plant only the upland glutinous rice, of which they have ten or eleven varieties, most of them white. They clear the steep mountain sides by cutting out some of the brush and smaller timber, burn off the place, dig up the ground with their small hoes, and raise two or three crops of rice, maize, and sweet potatoes. When the rice is ripe it is cut and bound in small bundles. These bundles are placed in racks under thatched roofs to dry and sweat and later stored in the rice rooms in the houses, and beaten out and pounded as needed. When the fertility in one place is exhausted they go to another hillside and repeat the process. When all the hillsides within easy distance (what they call "easy distance" would be four hours' walk for a foreigner) are used up they have no recourse but to move their whole village, so move they do. One advantage of course is that the housewife does not need to clean her domicile, and the smoky, grimy house of several years' use can well be left—but it is a bitter life.

3: Moninger E-5 (no date) 1921 AE5 Miao AE5

241

THIS SHOWS THE TERRIBLE WASTE OF TIMBER. THE MIAOS BURN THE GRASS AND FOLIAGE TO SOW THE UPLAND RICE.

at best. They are truly "the eternal pioneers," and one old-young woman told me she had moved *twelve* times in her life of forty-odd years.

231 241 262 Their few pigs they cannot afford to eat except at wedding feasts, but sell them to the Hainanese traders. Chickens and ducks they eat occasionally, and also prepare the salted eggs. They raise very few greens but occasionally will buy them from a neighbouring Loi village. Corn is raised a great deal—a small variety of maize that does very well on the hillsides. The heart of a certain variety of palm tree is a common food, and in times of famine roots of trees and brakes, bark, anything, must be used to stay the pangs of hunger. A well-to-do family may own a few cows, but they have a curious custom which they often follow, of giving their cows to the neighbouring Lois to care for. The calves of course revert to the original owner, but the Lois use the animals to work their rice fields and to haul the great logs of hardwood to the rivers.

224 261 Bears are found in the mountains, and the Miao prepare pitfalls and traps for them, shooting them when they have been thus captured. A species of small antelope makes very good eating. Wild boar are also often captured, and likewise

3. Moninger E-5 (no date) 1921 AE5 Miao AE5

the porcupine, whose flesh is eaten, and whose shiny black and white quills, often a foot long, have various uses. The flying squirrel is a rarer victim, as only the poisoned dart shot from the crossbow by a skilled hunter is quick enough to strike it. Jungle fowl of all sorts are used for food.

The fishing is usually done on a large scale. If a youngster goes a-fishing, his outfit is a piece of bamboo and a piece of hemp string with a noose on the end, where he nooses his catch. But when the rivers are low a whole village or perhaps several villages will join in a common fishing expedition. Some of the men dam the river, others go to the forest and come back laden with the bark of a certain tree and a certain vine. These barks are pounded in mortars until well macerated, mixed, and pounds and pounds of the "medicine" are poured into the river above the dam. The mixture kills or stupifies the fish, which rise to the top of the water and are easily secured. The catch often amounts to a thousand-odd pounds of fish, not to mention crabs and eels and other creatures. The fish are cleaned immediately and the people eat them without fear although they say that a chicken or duck that eats the entrails will sometimes die from the poison. The fish not wanted for immediate consumption are salted down with a variety of pooped rice and kept for future use. This method may injure the small fish in the river—undoubtedly it does injure them in the immediate vicinity of the catching—but does not have any serious effect on the total supply, apparently.

The costume worn by the men differs very little from that worn by an ordinary Chinese labourer except in the way the coat fastens, as it laps a little to the left and fastens slantingly down the front. The costume worn by the women however, is the distinguishing feature of the people, and is a very attractive outfit in its blue and red with touches of other colours on the head kerchief. For a grown woman, the costume consists of a kerchief, a coat and a short skirt, both dark blue, and dark blue puttees. A narrow red silk girdle, about an inch wide, woven by the women themselves and ending in long fringe, is worn around the hips. The same style of tie, only about a quarter of an inch wide, fastens each puttee just below the knee. The material for the clothing is bought from the traders, and is a coarse, heavy, unbleached cotton cloth. The women dye the goods with indigo and set the colour with pigs blood. The coat is made quite like a Chinese woman's coat, but reaching to the knees and not lapping so far over to the side. A piece of turkey red cotton is embroidered and put on as a narrow collar band; the bottoms of the rather loose sleeves are edged the same

224 Many of the Miao are skilled hunters and they
411 will track animals with a keenness similar to that of an American Red Indian. The wild boar is hunted on foot, and when he charges is knifed with consummate dexterity. The deer is surrounded and chased from point to point until it is exhausted, the dogs entering with zest into the hunt. Pheasants are decoyed, and animals shot with a cross-bow and arrows. Sometimes the arrows are poisoned with a product derived from deadly nightshade.

415 The arts of Miao life are few, their implements for daily use being copied from the Chinese. For
361 mutual protection they live in hamlets or villages,
342 and their houses are mud built and thatched with grass.

342 Let us go into one of these—it is not without interest. You will notice there are two rooms.
231 In the inner room a cow, a few goats and sheep
281 and perhaps a pig are stabled. The cow is needed for ploughing, and the manure for their somewhat barren farm land. From the sheep's wool, capes and sleeping-rugs are woven. Skins from the goats serve as winter jackets for the older men. Morning and evening these cattle pass through the living-room to and from their grazing-grounds.
342 The living-room is a most extraordinary apartment, since it serves as kitchen, dining-room, guest chamber and, when night comes, as bedroom.
354 In the centre of the earthen floor a coal or wood fire burns, and if the wood be damp your eyes will smart and sting, since the only outlet for the smoke
352 is the door or the roof. Near the fire are a few

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

available but this is only for about half the year. Eggs are eaten on special occasions.[5]

The Ch'uan Miao are an agricultural people. They are all sons of the soil and get their living from the soil. Even those who are blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, hunters, priests or shamans have farms, sometimes owned but generally rented, and they depend primarily on farming for a living. Sometimes there are houses that are only a few rods apart but I have not seen or heard of a single Ch'uan Miao village or a locality that could boast of a single street.

In former days when land was plentiful and forests were abundant, a man often got his farm by cutting down the trees in a forest and later, when the wood was dry, burning off the trees and grass. This, of course, left a rich virgin soil. After a few years the land became less productive and the owner deserted it and made another clearing. Later the deserted land could again be used profitably. There are no longer such unclaimed virgin forests so that the Ch'uan Miao are obliged to keep their farms productive by means of fertilization.

The domestic animals and fowl are cattle, horses, water-buffalo, mules, donkeys, sheep, goats, dogs, cats, chickens, ducks and geese. Horses are not used for plowing but as riding and pack animals. Water-buffalo are generally used for plowing and harrowing in the rice fields while cattle are used in the dry fields and gardens. Mules and donkeys are less common than horses. There are many sheep in Yunnan Province but few in Szechwan where goats are more common. Every family has at least one watch-dog and there is a special breed of hunting-dogs. Cats are kept in families that are not too poor to afford them. Chickens are found in nearly every home but ducks and geese are less common. There are fewer water-buffalo and more horses and cattle among the Ch'uan Miao in Yunnan than in Szechwan. Cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, sheep or goats, pigs and water-buffalo are kept in barns that are near houses or are actually parts of the houses. Cats, dogs and chickens sleep inside the houses where they roam about unrestrained.

The farming implements do not differ from those of the Chinese. The same plows, harrows, hoes or mattocks, sickles, flails, and so on are used. The plow consists of a naturally crooked tree to which are attached an iron point and a wooden

5. R. G. Agnew investigated the diet of the Ch'uan Miao near Lo Piao and found that malnutrition was quite noticeable in most families and is a fundamental cause of the high death-rate, especially of children. He recommended that eggs be eaten for phosphorus and albumen, milk for minerals and vitamins, fruit for vitamin C and soya beans and vegetables for minerals and vitamins.

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

712

are none to be found. One explanation given by Ch'uan Miao friends is that the danger of fire was too great so that people no longer built their houses so close together. There are two other possible reasons. One is that the Chinese destroyed the strongholds in war and to prevent future rebellions, and the other is that there is no longer danger of raids and attacks from the Lolos. Chinese histories actually mention the destruction of the strongholds.[7]

788
765

There is an old custom that is not always practised according to which when a family moves an iron cooking vessel is buried near the old home as a means of commemorating it. Another old custom now no longer practised is that when a person died in a house the house was destroyed and the family moved to another spot and built a new home.

224

Hunting is a pastime engaged in by the men and boys when game is plentiful, in winter when there is less farm work to do and during the New Year holidays. Sometimes one person goes hunting alone, sometimes two or three men go out into the woods together and at other times a larger number make up a hunting party. In such a party some of the men guard the paths where the animals are likely to come out and others with dogs go towards them through the woods shouting and driving the animals towards their waiting companions. Formerly traps were set, snares were used, and pits were dug, but since the coming of firearms these have fallen into disuse. Bows and arrows and crossbows have almost but not entirely disappeared. The arrows are sometimes poisoned in which case they cause death within a short time.

463

It has already been noted that some Ch'uan Miao, in addition to being farmers, are also when occasion requires carpenters, blacksmiths or masons. A smaller number work in brass or silver, but the best work in all these trades is done by Chinese.

462

Both men and women work in the fields, using the hoe and the sickle, but only men use the plow. It is believed to be sinful for a woman to plow, for a cow or a water-buffalo is a worthy beast and woman is inferior, and if she does use the plow the animal she uses will accuse her of sin after she dies and goes to heaven. Both men and women carry loads on their backs or on carrying poles. Women generally carry water, make yarn from wool, make string from hemp shreds, do most of the sewing, cooking and weaving and do all the embroidery work, leaving the larger share of the farm work to the men. It is therefore customary to speak of one's mother as the old lady inside the house and of one's father as the old man outside the house.

---

7. This is mentioned in the history of the Prefecture of Suifu, [illegible]

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

[224] 524 Men sometimes amuse themselves by going hunting together, generally in the winter time when there is less work to do. Both men and boys play shuttlecock at New Year time. The shuttlecock is often made by fastening feathers to a piece of bamboo. Sometimes the shuttlecock is kicked but more often it is knocked back and forth by means of wooden bats. There is a memory game in which the players use grains of corn. One is blindfolded or turns his back and the grains of corn are laid out on the table. Others pick up the grains of corn, a few at a time and say, "So many grains have been picked up. How many are left?" Sometimes, one or two cobs of corn are held in the hand and the players guess how many grains of corn there are on each cob. One game is played by nailing two planks or wooden beams together in the center at right angles to each other and balancing them on a pivot. Four men or boys balance themselves on the four ends of the beams and others rapidly turn around the cross or wheel with the four men on it. "Playing lion" is indulged in at New Year time and at weddings. Two men throw over themselves a cloth resembling a lion's skin. Then the lion fights with a man who always triumphs over the beast. [573] Occasionally friends are invited to a feast where wine and tobacco are the principal means of entertainment. [576] Both men and women smoke tobacco and drink wine but few of them smoke opium.

583 The Ch'uan Miao are lovers of music and among their principal amusements are singing and playing the *liu shêng* 六笙 or six-tubed wind instrument accompanied with dancing. There is no written language and much of the history and legends or folklore of the group have been made into songs and are passed on from generation to generation. Some of [178] the words in the oldest songs are not understood by the Miao at the present time and many of the young people are not learning the songs so that it is probable that they will be forgotten and lost within the next forty years.

The Ch'uan Miao rarely sing group songs or songs in which men sing one verse and women sing another in response. This is more common among the Hua Miao. Nearly all the songs are sung by one person, a man or a woman, to whom others listen. Sometimes, but rarely, men sing one verse and [584] women sing in response alternating until the song is finished. The songs sung on such occasions are love songs. At engagement ceremonies the middle men of the bride and the middle men of the groom sing alternately, sometimes ridiculing and sometimes praising each other. These songs and their tunes have been composed and handed down to subsequent generations for hundreds and perhaps thousands of years and they

[161 cont.]

177 439 294 Since cultivation and the treatment of hemp is difficult and complicated, the "Méo" are adopting little by little the use of cotton materials which they buy in the markets from natives of the other groups. Likewise the women purchase from the Chinese merchants needles, multicolored thread and silk, glass decorations, and so on, used in their embroidery.

531 294 868 The art of embroidery, of which some of our photographs give us an idea, is developed to a degree of perfection one does not expect to find among these tribes, who in other respects are rather primitive. The young girls are trained from an early age in this delicate art, and they themselves prepare all the very richly decorated pieces of their wedding costumes.

The "Méo" make alcohol from rice or maize, either by fer- 273 mentation or by distillation. For the latter process, they make use of the stills already described.

317 439 The "Méo" of the sector of Thanthuy carry on an important commerce in coffin wood, a fossilized wood which has become proof against rotting and is much sought after by the Chinese for making coffins.

The "Méo" armorers manufacture guns with very long barrels, 326 of a model analogous to those of the "Man." The "Méo" know how to [411] make powder. They carry it in a small powder flask of horn, suspended from the neck by a cord on which colored glass beads are strung. They are adroit [162] and fearless huntsmen. They do not 224 fear to confront panthers and bears with their rudimentary weapons. Those of them who are enrolled in the corps of partisans charged with guarding the frontier, and who, as a result, are armed with a model 1874 rifle, demonstrate remarkable skill in hunting wild beasts, firing only when certain of making a kill in order to economize their precious ammunition. (We have had to pay the "Méo" partisans relatively large sums for the destruction of harmful animals, because of the bounty of 10 piasters for each panther killed.)

226 262 The "Méo" are not fishermen, fish being relatively rare in the upper reaches of the mountain torrents. Nevertheless, they eat fish (fresh or dried) when they have the opportunity.

/147 cont./

M 534 231 177 piece when the animal moves. These bamboo bells presumably are of Laotian origin. Moreover, there are wooden bells (Fig. 33). In this case several wooden clappers in the body of the bell swing on a wooden stick stuck through it. In addition heavy thick-walled brass bells, presumably of Chinese origin, are used (Fig. 34); there are also little silver bells which are attached to the scratching pins (see the chapter, "Clothing and Ornaments," Figs. 226 and 227).

A M 533 The Akha, like the Meau, are very good at whistling with the /148/ lips, between the teeth, or with two fingers. Sometimes they also blow on grass blades or leaf strips which they

30

31

M 534 [531]

Fig. 30. Bronze gong of the Meau, decorated with red and black cloth strips. 1/6 nat. size. The gong stick is made of wood wrapped with cloth.

Fig. 31. Magic rattle of the Meau. 1/6 nat. size. From two to 20 little iron plates differing in size are strung on an iron ring, and when the rattle is shaken by the handle, they make considerable noise.

A M 533 [224] hold between the thumbs. This technique is used especially in order to attract game (see the chapter, "Meaus of Subsistence," section on "Hunting"). /Figs. 32-35 appear here./ The bursting of large flowers and leaves, which is reminiscent of the similar amusement of European children, who use paper bags for it, is to be regarded more as play.

/168 cont./

231 776 [731] [789] [243] If a village is plagued by many sicknesses, the Meau erect a symbolic gate out of three crossbeams about 40 or 50 meters from the village on the path leading to their settlement. Here the dog is hanged, and it is assumed that henceforth, as a guardian spirit, it will seek to prevent evil spirits from treading the paths that lead into the village. The same procedure is followed before laying out a new rice field.

[764] [775] In addition the Meau practice in different ways the custom of killing a dog when a human being dies; as a spirit it is supposed to guide the soul of the deceased into the other world.

776 My informant explained to me that over this whole host of spirits there stands only one spirit to whom they all, even the ancestors, are subject, "as to a king." He is invisible like all the other spirits, but in contrast to the latter he does not have human form, and lives simultaneously in heaven and in the earth, he is omnipresent. This chief spirit or, if one prefers, "high god" of the Meau, is bisexual, that is, male and female at the same time. He is the "Father and Mother spirit" of the Meau, who call him nă thu pen do nă thu /169/ pĕ dŏ. Savina (1)

[114] [773]

1. II, p. 243.

gives his name as Ndo Chu or Chu Lau and maintains that this chief spirit, according to Meau belief, created the world. I was unable to find any confirmation for this notion, however.

It is not his affair to determine birth and death, but he is turned to when especially important reasons come up, for instance, when evil spirits are to be fought, and therefore especially in the case of epidemics and similar events. The animals of the forest are likewise under the jurisdiction of the high Father-Mother spirit. Therefore, the hunters must turn to him with their request for rich booty.

[931] [825] [224] [973] The Meau told me that human beings do not know who created the world (concerning the legends about this, see the chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales"). They also do not know who makes lightning and thunder and do not have any clear conception as to the origin of these natural phenomena. They presume, however, that they are linked with the actions of the

[821] [626]

/186 cont./

the hands of the dead." (In this connection I refer to my remarks concerning this author and the objectives of his investigation in the chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales," pp. 302-303.)

Lajonquière (1) gives the following portrayal: "Among the

1. II, p. 313.

Meau there are some individuals, half priests and half sorcerers, without a cult or ordination, who, however, ascribe to themselves supernatural powers. They close their eyes and release their soul from the mortal body so that it may make contact with the spirits in the depths of the earth. As special clothing, the sorcerers merely have a white veil which they put over their faces before the ceremony. Music and dancing play an important role in this, but it always ends with an elaborate feast."

According to the data of the various authors cited and my own observations, an error must be involved when Dhuraratsadorn (2)

2. Page 172.

writes that the Meau have no priests at all. At any rate, I could find a very clear separation of the activities of the male and female shamans from those of the other Meau, who, to be sure, also perform various magical procedures. Among them there is the hunting magic, which is practiced by successful hunters both among the Akha and the Meau without requiring the help or the presence of the shaman. For this magic the hunter must smear the front part of his crossbow with the blood of the slain animal. He then glues a few hairs or feathers, depending on whether a bird or other game is involved, to the blood and now believes that he will soon again be equally successful with the weapon. It is possible that such magical procedures which are feasible for every Meau have led to the view that this people has no individuals who can be regarded expressly as priests, that is, shamans. On the contrary, the activity of the shamans is very extensive.

/189 cont./

787 [756] The Meau ascribe extraordinary importance to various omens, whose number is almost legion. There are many omens that only the shaman knows how to interpret, while a great number is known to every Meau and he can interpret them himself and act accordingly. For example a field is abandoned if bad [241] omens appear, an /190/ accident occurs, or the crop fails, since one concludes from this that evil spirits are in it.

243 787 When a rice field is laid out, a person must be specially careful, and he does not by any means limit himself to the sacrificial festivals for the protective spirits described above, since the welfare of a Meau community depends upon the yield from the fields. The Meau live on the field products and the [433] booty from hunting; their dwellings and villages stand in the midst of forest areas. Hence it is not surprising that the behavior [825] and the presence or the absence of various animals are believed to be omens. In the search for a suitable location no muntjac may be seen or heard. If this obstacle is met successfully, it may still happen that when the first tree is felled, a turtle or a snake [796] appears. In that case only swift flight can save one, for it means that the dwelling of a spirit has been destroyed.

342 787 825 The omens which have to be heeded when a house is built are equally numerous. One may neither see a snake nor hear the "shriek" of a muntjac. Even the cry of a black squirrel is a bad omen. If none of these bad omens were noticed and if no bird dropped his excrement on the site chosen, the house and its occupants will be blessed.

224 787 825 In view of all this, it is self-evident that the Meau hunters, too, have absolute faith in the omens with which they are familiar. If one sets out to hunt and sees a snake or a muntjac, the undertaking is immediately called off. If one nevertheless wanted to proceed to hunt, he must expect to be killed by a wounded buffalo or elephant.

The muntjac plays an important and always unfavorable role. Merely its "shriek" is enough; the hunter who hears it believes that he cannot expect to bag any game.

/190 cont./

224 787 825 If the hunter tracks a wounded animal and, while camping at night, hears the cry of the large black squirrel, he assumes that the game has died in the meantime. If a spider spins its web over the place of a hunter's fire, he infers from this that he will soon bag some game.

787 825 /191/ It is regarded as a bad omen when a bird alights in a camp set up in the jungle. If the bird should perch on the tree under which one is resting and if, in addition, he is hit by its droppings, this is regarded as the most unfavorable omen imaginable. Strangely enough, omens are not linked with the conspicuous and common hornbill, whose plaintive call astonishes every stranger, even if he has not yet seen the grotesque appearance of the bird, and which plays an especially important role among head-hunting peoples. Monkeys, lizards, frogs, and fish likewise have little significance among the Meau, and heavenly [821] phenomena, too, are not connected with omens. Similarly there 754 are no practitioners of black magic among the Meau, although 829 the concept is generally known. For instance, it is believed that among the neighboring peoples in the valleys, especially among the Chinese and Lao, such magicians who are able to do harm to human beings are very common.

787 The art of soothsaying is also known to the Meau. The belief is that it is neither inheritable nor can it be taught, but that it simply depends on the will of the spirits which person is endowed with this faculty. And there is no means by which the will of the spirits can be influenced in this respect.

Great importance is ascribed to dreams since it is assumed -- as has been said -- that in sleep the soul goes wandering and therefore dreams are nothing but the experiences of the soul while a person is asleep. The interpretation of dreams is also the [756] business of the shaman, but, as in the case of omens, there are some dreams, too, that every Meau interprets in the same way.

[763] [171] In general it is assumed that one's parents will die if he dreams that he is losing his teeth. In this connection it is interesting to note that the idea of a sinister meaning of a dream in which teeth play a role is also found among the Lao and Chinese, as well as in Europe.

/192 cont./

787 general omens and those of the oracle. The oracle with the pair of chickens is used not only in connection with the birth of a child, but also on other occasions, and it has the advantage that from the combination of its omens one can see not only the good and the bad aspects, but also to what extent human beings will be able to intervene and avert evil.

The greatest importance is ascribed to oracles. The belief in the reliability of omens and oracles is so /193/ extensive that the Meau literally do not undertake anything without consulting the spirits and immediately give up any plan in case of an unfavorable answer. When I asked a female shaman to draw something [125] for me on the sheet of paper that I provided for my psychological investigations, she laid out an oracle to learn from her teacher-spirit whether and what she should draw! Only then did she take my sheet of paper and draw.

439 Once every year some Chinese traders (see the chapter, 787 "Trade") visit the remote and widely scattered Meau villages in order to do business by selling goods that they bring along and by buying various products of the Meau. On these occasions it not infrequently happens that all the trouble and expense on the part of the traders has been in vain, even though the Meau for their part would have been happy to do business with them. Before any [437] trading, however, the oracle is invariably consulted, for no Meau is going to sell pigs or opium or buy silver without first consulting the spirits. If the oracle predicts an unfavorable outcome, the Chinese trader has no choice but to leave the village without having transacted any business; his long and arduous journey with porters was in vain, for he can do nothing to induce the Meau to change their minds.

123 Even I had to submit to the verdict of the oracle, if I could ●224 not find a convincing way out. For example, Chief Tsin Tsai, [787] whose son Lü had regained his health through my plasmochin-atabrine treatment after the conjuration, had put me under his special protection out of gratitude. Tsin Tsai was an excellent and passionate hunter. When I noticed that he was annoyed by our constant questioning or our requests for food, I proposed to [327] him, the best gunsmith for miles around, by the way, that we

39: Bernatzik--262 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
Miao AE5

/193 cont./

123 go hunting together, and immediately Tsin Tsai was again
224 favorably disposed toward me. We would set out to hunt ele-
[322] phants, gaur, and other big game which, with his primitive guns,
[411] he was able to kill only at the risk of his life. His passion for hunting was so great that, even at the time of the harvest, he would drop everything in order to accept my invitation. Need-
[411] less to say, Tsin Tsai also knew how to handle the crossbow, the most important and favorite weapon of the Meau, or poisoned arrows, with which any game can be brought down. My high-power rifle, /194/ however, aroused general admiration, and Tsin Tsai in particular could not get his fill of looking at it; he repeatedly picked it up and stroked it lovingly.

The Meau are familiar with the habits of game to a remarkable degree, naturally far more so than we Europeans. Just as I always deferred to the natives while hunting in the tropics, here, too I followed the instructions of the bold Meau hunters. They know the weather and the wind directions in relation to the haunts of the game; they are familiar with the scarce sources of salt in the primeval forest, which are regularly visited by all the wild animals; they know whether and at what time of the day or night the various species of animals seek out the waterholes or the salt licks; they deduce from the tracks of a wounded animal when it will take cover; in a word, they know the answers to all the questions that are involved in success for a hunter in the primeval forest.

123 Chief Tsin Tsai in particular was able to answer the most
224 incredible questions. After a short time I myself relied com-
787 pletely upon what he said. In order to be able to judge the extent of the knowledge possessed by this excellent hunter, I constantly posed new and more difficult questions, which nevertheless were always answered. When I tried, as far as possible, to verify his statements, I soon, to my surprise, found contradictions and inaccuracies. Finally, however, this inexplicable situation was clarified for me, when I discovered Tsin Tsai engaged in having my questions answered by the spirits by means of oracles! Apparently the spirits were less well informed about the living habits of the animals than the living Meau were!

/194 cont./

123
224
787

As far as I was concerned, the situation was difficult if not actually perilous if I wanted to remain on good terms with the Meau. I could not contradict the spirits and had to follow their orders, which were transmitted to me through the mouth of the chief. Hence it was of utmost importance for me to become thoroughly familiar with the pertinent customs of the Meau. One day Tsin Tsai asked me to accompany him on a gaur hunt. A Meau had wounded a splendid old gaur, but was afraid, and very justifiably so, as I soon discovered, to track down this solitary beast in the difficult terrain. Therefore, /195/ he stopped the pursuit, returned to the village, and reported the facts to the chief. A few hours later, we, the chief, my interpreter, and I, were standing at the spot of the shooting. We had no difficulty in finding the path of flight of the heavy animal. We followed it until it led into an impenetrable thicket, which, as dense secondary growth, covered a rice field abandoned some six years earlier.

With our chopping knives we laboriously started cutting our way through the thicket and could not see two meters ahead. Added to that, the wind changed direction every few minutes. Under these circumstances tracking down an old, as well as wounded, solitary animal was tantamount to suicide. To judge by the trail which led up a steep hillside, it was highly improbable that the animal had died, but, on the other hand, reasonably certain that sooner or later we would be attacked by the wounded buffalo, without being able to parry such an attack by the wounded animal even halfway successfully at this short distance without having the shot pass out of the animal's body.

From the viewpoint of the hunter, Tsin Tsai had evidently committed an error, which surprised me. I drew his attention to the dangers that surrounded us. Tsin Tsai calmly confirmed my observations, but nevertheless held the opinion that, in spite of everything, no danger could threaten us, and, indeed, we were certain to be successful, for he had consulted the spirits by means [782] of the oracle and had even sacrificed a pig to them before we set out, and all the omens had been favorable! Naturally, I could not call the spirits liars, much less question their power. On the

/195 cont./

123 other hand, I had no desire to pursue such a hopeless affair for
224 which I was not responsible. Only strategy could help. Amiably
987 I turned to Tsin Tsai: "Your spirits were right. I, too, however, questioned my hunting spirit. He told me that he would have to go up into the clouds and therefore could not assist me. He advises me therefore to stop the pursuit." The chief understood this immediately. The hunt was immediately called off, and without protest we were able to start back, for Tsin Tsai had no intention of exposing me to danger.

/196/ Another time -- but by no means always -- I was successful in using my influence to overcome bothersome hindrances which the oracle made for us. One day, I could not do any ethnographic fieldwork because my informants were not available. I therefore wanted to go hunting with a Meau, who for his part was very much in favor of my proposal. Beforehand, however, he wanted to consult the oracle as to whether the undertaking planned should be done at this time. Naturally, I feared difficulties again, but I quickly found a way out. I reminded the Meau that he had just laid out the oracle a few days before and that the spirits had told him that we would kill the gaur which I now wished to hunt. The spirits would certainly be annoyed by his asking again. Fortunately that satisfied my Meau; he gave up the oracle and set out with me.

I myself, however, tried to obtain answers through the oracle of the Meau, in order to familiarize myself in every way with their ideas. In one case I wanted to know whether I would have a chance to shoot a certain old bull elephant whose haunt was known to me and to the chief. The chief lighted a fire, burned three pieces of the spirit-money which he carried with him, whittled three small bamboo sticks, and held them between the thumb and index finger of his right hand. Then he drew them through the fire several times, held them up toward the sky, and, while these preparations were going on, began conjuring the great Father-Mother spirit. He informed him that
[782] he had sacrificed spirit-money and asked for answers to the following questions: Whether the bull elephant was occupying its usual haunt at the present time, whether I would be able to shoot it,

/196 cont./

123 and whether, after the shot, we would be able to get the booty. With each question, Tsin Tsai pointed to one of the sticks in order to communicate to the spirit in this way the significance of each stick. He then bent each stick with his thumb nail at intervals of about three centimeters, until he finally held all of them in his hand in the manner shown in Ill. 98 as triangles and scrutinized them carefully. The position of the upper side of the first stick which stood for the haunt of the bull elephant, was horizontal, which indicated the unchanged position, that is, the unchanged /197/ haunt of the bull. If the point of this side had been turned away from the sacrificer, it would have meant that the bull had moved away. The point of the second stick, which was supposed to answer the question regarding the shot, was turned toward the sacrificer, which meant an affirmative answer. The reverse position would have indicated that I would not have a chance to shoot. The upper side of the third stick was likewise turned toward the sacrificer, thus this question, too, was answered affirmatively, and we could therefore count on seizing the game.

We eagerly set out on the hunt. We actually found the bull in its haunt, and we stalked it until we were about 20 paces from it. Through the bush I repeatedly saw the outlines of the enormous gray mass. Only once, however, for a fraction of a second would I have been able to fire a fatal shot. Under these circumstances I could not make up my mind to follow the advice of the chief, who actually trembling with buck fever, demanded, with reference to the predicted outcome, that I shoot at the bull through the tangle of vegetation. The giant animal escaped unharmed when the wind turned for a moment and carried our scent to him. Thus at the last moment I failed to put the oracle to a definite test, but it seemed wiser to me to trust my hunter's instinct.

On another occasion we discovered a salt spring in the primeval forest, which, of course, was the meeting place for much game. After I had shot a fine gaur, however, the rest of the game seemed to have been blown away. Tsin Tsai decided to consult the high Father-Mother spirit about our further hunting prospects and set up his stick oracle, conducting his ceremonial performance in the same way as previously described. This

1 [See cat 116, p 663 - ANALYST]

/197 cont./

123 224 787 time he used seven sticks since he directed the following seven questions to the great Father-Mother spirit: whether we had a chance 1. to shoot tigers, 2. elephants, 3. buffalo, 4. deer; 5. whether the old bull elephant that we had pursued in vain into the thicket several days ago still remained at the same location, 6. whether a splendid old gaur that traveled alone and stayed in the thickets of abandoned rice fields in the vicinity of our Meau village could be slain by us; 7. my interpreter asked whether his wife and his newborn baby /198/ were doing well. As may be seen, the questions were posed in such a way that the answer had to be either yes or no.

Tsin Tsai now took the sticks one by one, bent them with his thumbnail ten or eleven times at intervals of about three centimeters, and left one side of each stick about ten centimeters long without bending. Then he took all the sticks into his left hand and folded them into triangles. Once again the answers given us by the great Father-Mother spirit were shown by the position of the upper side of the triangle and the tips. A horizontal position meant "situation unchanged"; if the tip of the triangle was directed toward the conjurer, it was taken as affirmative; if it was turned away from him, it was taken as negative.

Again we examined the oracle sticks and learned from them the following answers: Tigers, elephants, and buffalo have moved far away. Deer have remained and can be hunted since the other omens are not unfavorable. The old bull elephant: likewise "situation unchanged." He has therefore returned and is again occupying his station from which we pursued it in vain some days previously. The interpreter's question was also answered: his wife and child were doing well. The chief added that the wife was sleeping badly because she was worried about her husband. His son was thinking of him -- my informants put it in a rather charming way: "His soul is hopping to the father."

The answers to all six of the questions posed by me coincided fully with my own assumptions. Hence I had no objections to complying with them. This time, too, however, I could not test their correctness, for, although we did shoot deer, we did not have time to wait for the return of other big game, and I

Miao AE5
AKha A04

/198 cont./

M 123 224 787 could not take the time to check whether or not they were actually to be found in their haunts. Moreover, such an attempt would very obviously have shown distrust of the oracle. Much later we learned that the interpreter's wife had actually been worried about her husband. We had stayed in the primeval forest area much longer than was originally intended and had all been given up for lost.

A 756 The Akha, too, believe that there are human beings who are born with supernatural faculties, but, in contrast to the /199/ Meau, know far fewer people of this kind. Accordingly, A [634] [621] the latter are regarded as much more powerful than they are among the Meau. These people are the chief shamans, called tŭmō. Every tŭmō stands over many villages, and if one remembers that the villages of the Akha embrace several hundred houses, the importance of the tŭmō becomes obvious.

A [622] The ordinary shaman is called bŭbā among the Akha. This office often coincides with that of the chief. Aside from this, however, the bŭbā plays a comparatively larger role than the tŭmō, because in every village there lives a bŭbā, who is far more intimately connected with his village community than the tŭmō is with the villages under him.

A 756 778 [776] Both the tŭmō and the bŭbā are mediators between the spirits and human beings. The bŭbā has to offer the regular sacrifices to the spirits, and furthermore, above all, he has to take care of the spirit of the swing and the guardian spirit. Accordingly, he is in charge of the management and upkeep of the sacral gates. Also, the wooden idols beside the sacral gates (Ill. 48)[1] are carved at his command by men of the village chosen by him, who also decorate the gates newly erected every year, while the old gates gradually disintegrate. This A [174] custom made it easy for us to ascertain how many years previously a village had been founded. One need only count the number of gates at the entrance to the village.

1 [See cat 116, p333 - ANALYST]

/260 cont./

166 484 If the path forks, the head carefully puts branches over the path, by means of which those following can see the direction in which they must continue.

[201] In general, if there is no compelling reason such as war, [361] epidemics, crop failure as a result of rice diseases, and the like, [731] a migration is never farther than a half of at most a full day's march from the old village.

/261/ During the migration one always tries to reach the desired goal by the shortest route. Winding paths are taken only if there are pack animals, and then only as many as are absolutely necessary in order to prevent a breakdown of the animals. Otherwise, it goes straight uphill and then continues along the crest line; upon reaching the end, it goes straight down again, across the valley and usually through a brook, and then again climbs up the next mountain ridge. -- This kind of migra- [171] tion differs fundamentally from that of the Thai peoples, who always, as far as is in any way possible, follow the brook beds in the valleys and, when that is no longer feasible, cross the mountain by the shortest route, in order to reach the brook bed again on the other side. The manner in which the Meau travel reminds one very much of that of the Lapps and makes European [481] ideas seem positively ridiculous. They walk very fast and rest [312] often. In no time a water pipe is carved out of bamboo and makes the rounds, or a stub pipe of wood is lighted (see the chapter "Food and Stimulants"). Water is drunk from every little brook that is reached. Nevertheless they rapidly push onward.

During the migration the intimate association with the natural surrounding is clearly evident. They are constantly look- [283] ing for useful objects. Whether it be lianas whose fibers will [285] later be twisted into ropes, or those that, cut into strips, will later serve as plaiting material, in no time they are lopped off, rolled up, and fastened to the packsaddle. A squirrel is killed with a well-aimed shot of the crossbow and stowed away in the [224] pack bag; perhaps even a muntjac is bagged. The latter rarely happens, however, for, although otherwise they stalk game as soundlessly as wildcats while hunting, on a migration it is as though all the evil spirits were let loose. The shouting, hooting,

39: Bernatzik--460 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 A01 Thailand

[p 459 is blank]

AKha A04
Miao AE5

Chapter 17

Means of Subsistence

a) Gathering

M 222 M [731] A 222 [262] [731] After the harvest the Meau regularly gather wild roots, tubers, and fruits. Beyond this time gathering is done only occasionally, for instance, on hunting expeditions or during migrations. In times of crop failures, however, gathering plays an important role and may even become a necessity for survival. Among the Akha in Thailand, who live under absolutely the same climatic conditions and whose diet, in accordance with their generally greater primitiveness, is less varied than that of the Meau, gathering plays at least an equally important role in times of famine. In years of abundance, on the other hand, it is likewise practiced regularly only after the harvest, but otherwise only occasionally.

b) Hunting

M 224 A [224] M [151] [184] Hunting is of much greater significance than gathering among the Meau and among the Akha. The Meau are excellent observers, have presence of mind, and are animated by a burning passion for the hunt. Since, in addition, they are excellent marksmen and have great patience and endurance, they have all the qualifications for good hunters.

With regard to the Meau in Indochina, who, of course, are in a far better position economically than the mountain peoples on the poor soil in northern Thailand, hunting seems to be less important. Lajonquière (1) writes, for instance:

1. II, p. 311.

M [411] [171] [389] "Hunting is not practiced as a regular means of subsistence but they are nevertheless skilled hunters. They use a gun similar to the one of the 'Man,' which, /340/ like the powder, they make themselves."

/340 cont./

224 powder, they make themselves." Abadie (1) confirms this

1. Page 162.

observation. Savina (2), too, expresses himself about the

2. II, p. 230.

hunting of the Meau: "They principally hunt the wild pig, the bear, and the deer. The deer is hunted in the mountains which they burn off every year. It always comes to eat the young shoots under the ashes. The Meau also lure it with [231] [411] pieces of salt. All deer are fond of salt. They are hunted with dogs. Small game is shot with the crossbow."

In Thailand, in the habitation areas of the Meau, conditions are different insofar as burning the jungle for hunting purposes is impossible, since the damp, in part even succulent plants do not burn. In any case, high grass, which would nevertheless make burning on a large scale possible, does not grow under the trees.

224 411 As hunting weapons, the Meau use the crossbow (Ills. 79 and 93 and Figs. 316-320),[1] with which effective poisoned arrows are also shot. The flintlock gun (Ill. 78 and Figs. 306-[326] 308),[2] which they know how to manufacture themselves, is also important.

224 262 Everything that inhabits the jungle, as long as it has hair or feathers, is regarded as game by the Meau. Everything is used from the mouse to the elephant, from the small mammal to the wild peacock, with the exception of the large black squirrel, although there are, of course, considerable gradations in popularity. Elephant, rhinoceros, deer, muntjac, and wild pig are especially desired. Birds, on the [223] other hand, are less so, because they provide too little meat, as the informants said. Lizards, snakes, and worms, on the other hand, are not eaten.

1 [See ref 116, pp576, 643, +530 - ANALYST]
2 [" " " , pp 576 + 526 - "]

/340 cont./

221 224 [461] Hunting is done by the Meau in all seasons of the year, but especially after the harvest has been brought in and the field work completed, for then they have leisure, whereas the period of field work must be put to good use in order to plant and harvest on time. Nevertheless, I have seen it happen that the passion for hunting induced the Meau to drop their extremely important field work in order to track down a stray elephant bull.

185 224 There are no closed seasons. Literally everything that comes within shooting range of the hunter, male animals as well as females, gravid animals as well as the young, is shot. Thus, it is not at all surprising that /341/ within a short time after the founding of a village the game in the immediate vicinity, and soon in a wider area, is exhausted.

224 The Meau do not practice either hunting drives or communal hunts, but rather only individual hunting. Disguising the hunter in animal skins or masks to deceive the prey is unknown to them. It must be mentioned, however, that in the dense forest area that is available to them in northern Thailand a disguise would be obstructive and unnecessary.

For the individual hunting generally practiced among the Meau, two or three men usually set out together. The hunters, however, do not separate, as in communal hunting, but remain together in order to spring to the aid of one another in case of need. Since in the dense primeval forest a shot can be fired only at close range and the effectiveness of the Meau weapons is very limited in comparison with our hunting guns, it must therefore be assumed that the hunter will be attacked by every large animal that he shoots. The precaution of not going hunting alone is therefore absolutely mandatory, for often enough the companions are lifesavers in that they try to divert the pursuer from their fellow-hunter.

I was repeatedly able to confirm that the Meau know how to meet the dangers associated with this type of hunting. For example, in the company of Meau warriors I came across tree trunks with deep holes in them in three different places in the primeval forest. These were trees behind which the Meau

/341 cont./

224 accompanying me had sought refuge weeks and months ago when they were attacked by wounded gaur. The hunters had succeeded in escaping behind the tree trunk, but the horns of the raging wild oxen had penetrated into the trunks to a depth of ten centimeters.

Despite all their courage, stalking is seldom successful, since the density of the forest permits shots at only a few meters' distance, but the hunter betrays his presence to the animal at more than 100 meters by the noise which he cannot avoid making. Under these circumstances lying in ambush at the haunts or watering places of game is much more promising. For the big cats that have seized a head of livestock, the Meau build themselves a high place near the carcass for an ambush. If the hunters, however, succeed /342/ in finding a [135] salt spring such as sometimes occurs in northern Thailand, the Meau are often able to bag considerable game by this [136] method. Here the Meau successfully hunt even gaur, tigers, and the Indian rhinoceros, a few specimens of which lead a hidden existence there.

Elephant hunting is usually practiced among the Meau by stalking, since the pachyderms are not very sensitive to noise. [237] For this, however, the hunters smear fresh elephant dung all over themselves, since they maintain that with this masking scent they are able to approach the pachyderms, even in an adverse wind, up to a distance of only 15 steps. Although I could not decide in favor of this method myself, I believe that this assertion is quite possible.

In their ambush the Meau often use all kinds of lures about five centimeters and more in size (Fig. 257), in order to attract the game. In this connection a tree fruit is used as a vibrating pellet in the bamboo body of the instrument. During the rutting season the call of the female animal is imitated with blades of grass and leaves, which are clamped between the two thumbs, in order to attract the male muntjac. Similar methods are used for deer and many other game animals. Small beasts of prey are lured by means of the sound of a dying

/342 cont./

224 animal victim, such as an imitation of the "piping" of a mouse and the like.

Whereas for stalking fire arms are used as a rule, in ambush the Meau prefer the noiseless crossbow with the effective poisoned bolts.

How skilled the Meau are as hunters was revealed at my very first meeting with them. Later, besides my medical [123] knowledge, it was precisely my hunting ability that was decisive for the success of my ethnographic work, even though it was considerably inferior to that of some of the Meau. For 224 example, one of my informants, a man of about forty-five, 434 had bagged a great deal of game with his primitive weapons during his lifetime, which also affected him economically. 556 He had killed more than 20 elephants, and for the ivory of [434] each of them he was paid 200 to 400 ticals by the Chinese [435] traders. Since one only needs to add 10 per cent to arrive at the amount in marks, that amounts to 220 to 440 marks /343/ for each tusk. Moreover, he had killed two rhinoceros, each of which brought him 800 ticals. Considerable sums had likewise flowed in to him for buffalo horns and stag antlers, whose number he no longer knew because he had killed so many of these animals. This is immediately understandable [434] if one remembers that the Thailanders and especially the [435] Chinese pay a thousand ticals for the first growth of the horns of a stag in its second year /for the horns of the Kolbenhirsch/, because it is regarded as a precious aphrodisiac. Even though the traders undoubtedly gained many times this amount, nevertheless such proceeds from hunting booty are of great importance. [595] My informant had this to thank for being able to buy three wives. Apart from the material side, however, such success in hunting, considering the situation with regard to game in northern Thailand, represents a prodigious hunting accomplishment which a European with precision rifles could scarcely match, whereas my informant had only his primitive weapons at his disposal.

39: Bernatzik--465 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 A01 Thailand
Miao AE5

/343 cont./

224 [177] Pitfalls are not set up by the Meau. To be sure, some Meau hunters are familiar with this hunting method from the Lao, but it is not used, as was explained to me, because of the fear that human beings might fall in. The Meau do know a method of catching tigers, however, which is in a way reminiscent of pitfalls. At a point where the customary path of the tiger leads across a brook, a tree trunk cut in the middle is laid across the watercourse. Under the breaking point thus prepared, pointed posts are put in the brook and screened, and the tiger, plunging down, is impaled on them. During our stay the Meau actually succeeded in capturing a big cat in this manner.

The catching of mammals in nets is unknown, but the Meau are very skillfull in setting self-firing traps with a crossbow built in (see the section, "Agriculture," in this chapter), as well as nooses, which, in long rows, always with one noose beside another, are set so as to be invisible in the grass (Figs. 254-256). In association with bait or decoy-whistles (Fig. 257), the hunters then succeed in catching the [223] representatives of the gallinaceous birds, which are especially numerous in Thailand, in the noose or in the snare that has been set (Ill. 80[1] and Fig. 258). Larger animals up to the size of a deer are caught by the Meau in plate-traps. These consist of a foot board, /344/ which, when stepped upon, pulls up a flexible branch to which the noose is attached and thereby drawn together.

The construction of such deer traps is shown in Fig. 259. When the game steps on the boards fastened on one side over a pit and screened with leaves, the small board e and the crossbar d fall down, which releases the string J and the liana L, and the branch M /Figs. 254-259 appear here/ /345/ snaps upward. Through this the noose H, which was also connected with the liana and was placed over the foot boards, draws together around the leg of the animal. The snaring line is tied fast to a peg driven into the ground so that the captured game cannot escape. In setting the trap, the branch is bent down so low by means of block and tackle that the small board

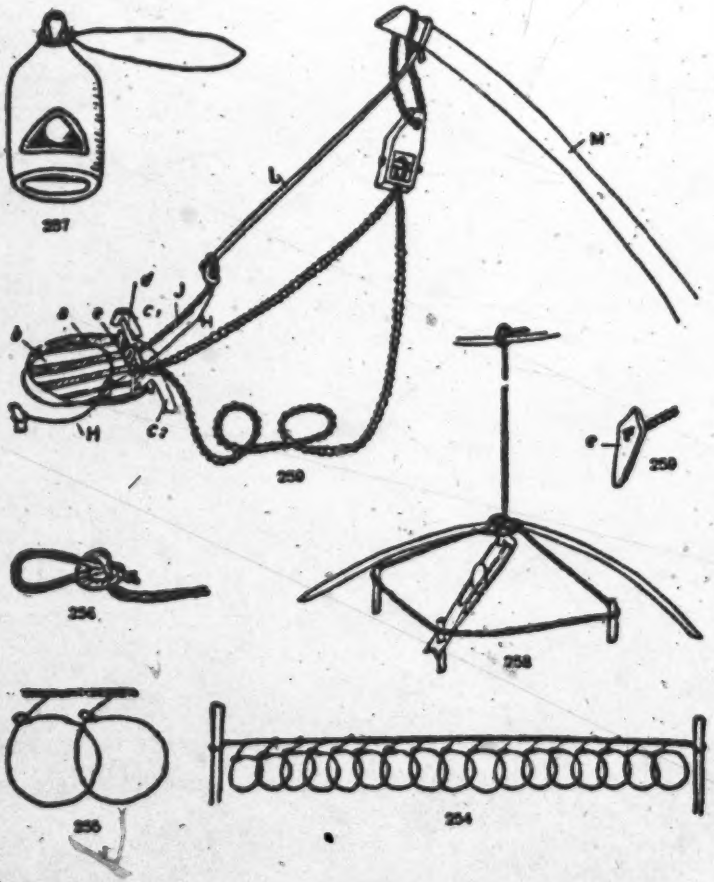
[1] [see cat 116, P595- ANALYST]

39: Bernatzik--466 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
Miao AES

223
224

Figs. 254-259. Snaring Equipment of the Meau.

Figs. 254-256. Snaring nooses in a row arrangement: Fig. 254, complete picture, 1/20 nat. size; Fig. 255, arrangement of the nooses; Fig. 256, noose



[534]

knot. Fig. 257. Decoy whistle for bird-hunting, 1/2 nat. size. Fig. 258. Bird trap, 1/5 nat. size. Fig. 259. Deer trap, 1/15 nat. size.

/345 cont./

224 e can be wedged between the crossbar d and a foot board. After the trap has been set, the block and tackle are removed.

As an example of the behavior of the Meau hunter while stalking game in the forest, I give in the following a description from my journal: "Scouts had reported to us that a powerful lone bull elephant with mighty tusks had taken cover not far from the village. Early in the morning I set out with the chief. We climbed a steep slope and then stood at the edge of a gorge, from the bottom of which came the sound of the breaking of branches. The large mammal stood below, which made the face of the Meau light up happily. He bent forward, remained there for some time, then climbed a tree, changed his observation post several more times, and finally, from the direction of the sound, decided that the elephant was on the opposite mountain slope.

Since in order to reach him, we would have had to wind through the deep gorge in between and it was already late in the afternoon, there was no prospect of reaching the bull still 224 that same day. The chief therefore proposed that we spend the 484 night on the spot in order to be able to take up the chase at dawn, since he figured that he would be able to determine the location of the elephant from where we were. The Meau [342] therefore put up a small windscreen, large enough to protect us, if necessary, against a storm. He closed off three sides of it with leaves of the fan palm, their stems thrust into the ground, in order, as he put it, to prevent the warmth from [513] escaping. He then covered the ground with a layer of leaves about ten centimeters high, which was an excellent bed, for it was soft and kept off the dampness of the ground. At the open side of the windscreen he lighted a fire. These tasks took him about 30 minutes.

"Then he began to prepare the evening meal. He searched for water, and after only a few minutes he returned [824] with bamboo-water. In /346/ these regions one can find [272] water stored up in the hollow spaces of certain species of bamboo, even during the dry season. To get the water, such [415] bamboos are cut between the partitioning walls, the liquid [252] that flows out is caught in a bamboo vessel. A thick green [824] bamboo also provided a vessel in which the rice was then cooked. The green

/346 cont./

224 484 juice of the plant prevented its being burned through before the meal was ready. As soon as the rice was cooked soft, the [252] Meau slit open the bamboo and emptied the contents upon a [824] large leaf, which served him as a plate. Then he put a little [415] of it on a small leaf, which he put aside. This was the [782] offering to the spirits. Then the meal began. The rice was [264] formed into balls with the fingers and eaten with the hands. [574] Hospitably the chief offered me some of his meal, and he [262] helped himself heartily when I invited him to enjoy some of the sardines in oil that I had brought along. Whereas other foreign peoples with whom I have dealt did not at all like European food and in particular sardines in oil, the Meau enjoyed everything tremendously.

[276] "When he had finally smoked his opium pipe, during which he attended to the fire from time to time, we lay down for our rest. It was somewhat disturbed at times, since, as a consequence of a head cold from which I was then suffering, I snored in my sleep, which caused the Meau to wake me up often. Moreover, I was heavier than he was, and consequently a deeper depression was made on my side, so that in his sleep he repeatedly rolled down on me, and I had no choice on my part but to wake him up often, which he did not seem to mind. We used these involuntary interludes of wakefulness to listen for the elephant, and we could hear his crackling until shortly before daybreak.

"With the first morning light, the Meau was up and dis- [262] appeared into the forest for 20 minutes and then returned with all kinds of leaves which, as vegetables, he mixed into the rice. Some of them tasted like sorrel, others like mint; in short, many resembled our seasoning herbs. Next he brought small, pepper-like fruits of a palm tree, the small, brown, salty-tasting fruits of a forest tree, and two fruits [263] of the wild lemon tree. He crushed these condiments and put them, like the various kinds of leaves, /Ills. 63-66 appear here on unnumbered pages/ /347/ into the rice. He [264] cooked an ample portion, enough rice for the midday meal

[Text continues on p. 473]

/347 cont./

224 as well, which was to consist of the cold remains of breakfast.
484 At the end of this morning meal, too, the opium pipe could
not be dispensed with. Then the provisions were carefully
[264] wrapped in green leaves. At every handling of the food, the
[276] Meau saw to it that not one rice kernel was lost. All his
movements were uncannily quick and executed methodically,
and in scarcely forty minutes from the time we got up we
were ready to set out.

224 "We now had the strenuous task of climbing down the steep slope and soon came across the elephant's tracks, which the Meau, bent far forward like a sleuth-hound, followed. In places we crossed rocky terrain, and the tracks of the pachyderm were then no longer visible to my European hunter's eyes. This was not the case for the Meau, who lay down flat on the ground and, from barely discernible signs, such as a small overturned stone a bent blade of grass, recognized the trail, even though it had sometimes been crossed by muntjac or deer.

"All of a sudden, in the densest of forest thickets, we stumbled upon the haunt of an old gaur bull, which, as the tracks showed, did not leave his hiding place of about one hundred square meters. Straining all his senses, the Meau crept forward soundlessly and in a whisper bade me to watch out, since in this area we might easily be attacked by the buffalo at very close range. After considerable effort we reached the bottom of the valley, crossed the brook flowing in a torrent here, and began the ascent. Laboriously and step by step we had to fight our way straight up through the densest underbrush of thorns and ilex. In a short time I was bathed in sweat and, with pulses pounding, had to rest, especially since I was hampered by my long gun. The Meau, however, was impatient and pushed on relentlessly. When he saw that I had reached the end of my strength, he offered to take my gun and my rucksack and thus laden nevertheless struck out at such a pace that I had to put on the brake again and again.

Akha A04
Miao AE5

/347 cont./

M
224

"I was glad when we reached the spot where the elephant had spent the night. I threw myself on the ground in order to regain my strength, but the Meau immediately set about /348/ attentively investigating the terrain. In the midst of the densest primeval forest 36 banana plants had been uprooted. The elephant had eaten part of their shafts. Mighty trees were broken down and their bark scraped off. With his tusks the pachyderm had dug out deep pits, and at several places he had worked himself up an incline of almost 45 degrees with the help of his powerful tusks. The Meau accurately estimated the length of the tusks by the depth of the pits here.

"Hour after hour the tracks, running in all directions, were followed, and we were always thinking that now we must come upon the animal, especially since the droppings were still warm. The tracks still went on, however, and after a another hour we had to confirm that the droppings were cold. That meant that the game was now moving away from us without delay. Under these circumstances we had no further chance of approaching the bull in this terrain, which could be traversed by human beings only with the greatest difficulty, and therefore abandoned the pursuit."

A
224

The Akha, like the Meau, are endowed with all the attributes that are included in the concept of good hunters. They, too, are animated by a true passion for hunting, which enables them to perform extraordinary physical accomplishments while hunting. Because of this it is likewise possible for the Akha, as was previously described in the case of the Meau, to change in times of crop failures from field produce to hunting booty for the bulk of their nutrition, in spite of all the difficulties associated with hunting in these dense mountainous forests.

A
[731]
[262]

AKha A04
Miao AE5

A /348 cont./

224 A difficulty for successful hunting is added among the
[326] Akha, because they do not make the customary flintlock
[439] guns themselves, as the Meau do, but must obtain them from
[411] neighboring tribes. These weapons are therefore very rare
[231] among the Akha, and one generally sees only the crossbow in use (Ill. 30).[1] On the other hand, the Akha have hunting dogs at their disposal, which, on the contrary, are not used among
M the Meau in Thailand, while falcons or other animals trained to
[231] hunt are unknown to both tribes.
[224]

Hunting big game is not practiced by the Akha as a rule. They limit themselves to animals up to the size of a deer,
A such as muntjac, wild /349/ pigs, monkeys, and, above all,
223 deer. Various birds are to be added, but vultures, ravens,
[262] or hornbills are not hunted, since they are not eaten.

They also know how to catch live parakeets, small parrots, and wild doves very skillfully with lime twigs and decoys (Ill. 31[2] and Figs. 260 and 261). In order to catch them with lime twigs, a wooden frame (Fig. 260, A) is erected on the house roof and to its upper end are fastened crosswise two
A wooden crosspieces smeared with lime (B). The birdlime re-
[314] quired is made from the juice of a rubber-type liana. It is pounded in a mortar with a mallet until it changes into a viscous lime whose most valuable property is its invariable consistency and stickiness.

A Among the Akha, too, no animal that they know how to
224 overcome is spared, and they hunt in all seasons without
[185] observing any closed seasons. Accordingly, what has been said about the Meau also applies for the Akha: a short time after a village is established, its surroundings is "cleared," even though involuntarily, of game.

Whereas the Meau exclusively practice the individual hunting described, communal hunts and hunting drives take place as a rule among the Akha. Since the external picture of the hunting grounds is the same for both tribes, might not this difference ultimately be traced back to the use or non-use of hunting dogs, as well as to the fact that the Akha do not hunt dangerous big game. The Akha, too, use no clothing

1 [See cat 116, p 249 - ANALYST]
2 [" " " p 250 - "]

/355 cont./

243 the first two or three violent thundershowers, the seeding is begun. If the large /extended/ family has many members, the freshly cleared land, which may have large dimensions, is subdivided many times into fields of half a hectare to three hectares, each planted with one certain kind of seed. If, however, it is a matter of a family with fewer members, all the seeds are mixed together, and the mixture is sowed for higgledy-piggledy growth.

224 243 As soon as a field is laid out and the seed is sown, a great number of game and bird traps are set up everywhere. Particularly popular is a kind of self-firing trap for wild pigs and deer, for which a crossbow with poisoned arrows is used. To be sure, they make entering the field very dangerous for anybody who is not familiar with the locality. Moreover, instead of fences which would keep off wild animals, traps are set on compulsory game-trails, in which all game from the pheasant to the wild pig is caught or falls victim to baited snaring devices. The animals caught represent an important [262] contribution to the diet of the Meau, and this is the reason why the fields are not protected by fences from intrusion and possible devastation by animals. Where no traps can be set or if /356/ whole herds of game visit the fields, the young men lie in ambush and in the moonlight capture a rich booty with their poisoned arrows.

243 [184] Savina (1) describes the arrangement of the rice fields

1. II. p. 216.

among the Meau in Indochina somewhat differently: "In the first month, when the New Year's festivals are over, the Meau put their fields in order. If the fields are far away, they stay there for eight to ten days. The men fell the trees with axes, and the women and children cut the grass with knives. In the second month the fields are set afire. Then maize is sowed. When the maize is in bloom, nights are spent in the fields in order to drive off the bears and the monkeys. When the maize [251] is harvested, it is brought to the house. The seed ears are

/390 cont./

389 iron pan slightly warmed over an open fire, allowed to dry, and the now firm mass is pounded to powder with the help of a wooden peg (Fig. 315).

411 Since there are only a few armorers among the Meau and the raw material for making guns must be obtained from the [321] Chinese trader, this weapon is not as generally /391/ wide- [439] spread by far as the crossbow (Ills. 79 and 93),[1] which the Meau are able to manage expertly.

The crossbow of the Meau is made very solidly out of hard wood and has the form shown in Fig. 317. It consists of a stock (a) with a guide groove (d) for the arrow, a bow of hardwood (b), and a recessed trigger (c) with a catch (e). The size of the crossbow varies and is regulated by the size and strength of the owner. The two most common kinds of trigger are represented by Figs. 316 and 318. The bowstring (f) con- [283] sists of rattan fibers twisted together. The cross-section of the arrow shaft (Fig. 319) is round and measures about four millimeters. The feathering, folded strips of bamboo ten to twelve millimeters wide, is clamped into the split part of the shaft and secured by a tight lashing. /Figs. 316-320 appear here./

/392/ The accuracy of such a crossbow is only half as [224] great as that of the gun, as is its penetrating power. Since the crossbow arrows (Figs. 319 and 320) are strongly poisoned, however, and in the primeval forest shooting is done only at short range, large game, indeed, even pachyderms, are killed with this weapon by the Meau.

Certain tribes must have used powerful crossbows in war. [175] The old Chinese literature, for instance, mentions crossbows which had to be cocked by three men. Poisoned arrows were shot with such crossbows (1). At that time mighty bows were

1. Eberhard, II, p. 259.

also still in use, which probably were superseded by the cross-bow at a very early date.

1 [See cat 116, pp 576 + 643 - ANALYST]

Miao AE5

/468 cont./

115 156 622 123 "Chief Tsin Tsai is a wonderful fellow. When he sits cross-legged on the ground, his long back hair knotted, the long tobacco pipe in his hand, his high forehead furrowed in thought, tensing the muscles of his lean jaws, /469/ stroking his sparse beard which hangs down from his strongly projecting zygomatic arches, he is so remarkably the typical representative of his industrious people, and yet he towers above their average. Not for a moment is he idle or unoccupied. Now he plaits a basket; scarcely finished, he cuts up a piece of game and distributes the meat, and now he sharpens his knife on a stone and goes into the bush for a few minutes. There he digs up some edible roots and brings them to us as a welcome supplement to our monotonous diet in the camp and visits my husband at his work in order to propose a hunting trip together. As soon [224] [787] as my husband has consented, he goes into his house to lay out a stick oracle and ask the spirits in which direction he must turn in order to have success, what kind of booty he can expect, and more of the same. During this time his people have come back from the fields. They quietly wait for the oracle and then turn to the chief with a series of questions. Quietly and decisively the latter now gives his orders and then is off on the hunt."

A few pages further in her journal my wife returns to the chief: "It is a pleasure to watch Tsin Tsai at work. He is friendly and helpful, offers us every service, carries the hand luggage, and regards no work as 'beneath his dignity.' Moreover, he is clever, circumspect, and prudent; he sizes up the situation immediately and is able to differentiate between the essential and the nonessential. He answers questions with brief, logical, and sensible replies. If one asks him for advice, he always supplements his information with detailed reasoning. To be sure, in matters dealing with hunting, he always judges for us on the basis of his own experiences, so that sometimes differences result. He maintains, for instance, that, after a shot, tigers come along to search for wounded game, whereas our experience was that they immediately disappeared, never to be seen again. Moreover, wild animals were generally much more timid than he expected, probably because there were more of us than he was accustomed to.

39: Bernatzik--725 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 A01 Thailand
Miao AE5

/VII cont./

534 Ills. 75-77. Musical instruments.

Ill. 75. The mouth organ of the Meau, which differs in size and construction from the instruments of the other mountain peoples of Farther India (cf. Ill. 25). The instrument is carefully carved out of wood and mounted with silver rings. The inserted flutes are made of bamboo. As among the Akha, the instrument is played exclusively by men and usually simultaneously with dancing. The mouth organ is of greatest significance for the Meau as a sacral musical instrument.

[562] [535]

Ill. 76. Simple rod-flute of the Meau, made of bamboo, with one blow hole and six finger holes on the upper side and one finger hole on the under side. The latter is kept shut during the playing.

Ill. 77. Jew's-harp. The instrument consists of a brass or bronze plate, the center of which is cut out to form a tongue. The jew's-harp is placed against the teeth and made to vibrate with the thumb of the right hand; the oral cavity forms the sounding board. A change in the size of the oral cavity produces a change of pitch.

Ills. 78-80 and 91-96. Means of subsistence.

411 Ill. 78. Flintlock gun, the chief weapon in war and for hunting, which the Meau make themselves, as well as the black gunpowder. The gun does not have a butt like the European gun, but merely a pistol stock. Lead or iron bullets are used. Although accuracy and penetrating power are slight, measured by European weapons, the Meau kill even big game with their guns.

Ill. 79. Crossbow. Next to the flintlock guns, the crossbow is the most important weapon of the Meau. Nevertheless, it is of less importance than among the Akha, who have almost no guns, and is usually used only for hunting birds and small game. With poisoned arrows, however, even large game and pachyderms are killed.

[223] [224]

223 Ill. 80. As passionate hunters, the Meau are masters at setting traps. The illustration shows a hunter who is setting a snare to catch wild birds. As soon as the bird touches the trigger stick, the noose jerks upward and the booty is caught in it.